

FROM: Deputy Chief R. E. Howard



DATE: September 3, 1999

Master Letter File # 8-4

RE: Tattoo/Brand and Body Piercing Policy

This memorandum incorporates a new Montgomery Fire Department Policy on tattoos/brands and body piercing. The Montgomery Fire Department recognizes that tattoos/brands and body piercing are a matter of personal choice and is allowable except when they are prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the fire service, or of a nature that tends to bring discredit upon the Montgomery Fire Department and/or otherwise do not present an acceptable appearance as a City of Montgomery Fire Department employee. Certain tattoos, brands, and body piercing are prohibited. They are as follows:

a. Unauthorized: Tattoos/brands anywhere on the body that are obscene and/or advocate sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination are prohibited in and out of uniform. Tattoos/brands that are prejudicial to the good order and discipline or of a nature that tends to bring discredit upon the Montgomery Fire Department and the City of Montgomery are prohibited in and out of uniform.

b. Inappropriate: Tattoos/brands will not be exposed or visible above the collar bone when wearing an open collar uniform, or on the wrist of hands when wearing a Class "A" long sleeve shirt.

c. Body Piercing: Members are prohibited from attaching, affixing or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue or any exposed body part (includes visible through the uniform).

Any member obtaining unauthorized or inappropriate tattoos, brands or body piercing will be required to remove them at their own expense. Using uniform items to cover such tattoos, brands or body piercing is not an option. Members failing to remove unauthorized or inappropriate tattoos, brands or body piercing in a timely manner will be subject to discipline including, but not limited to, dismissal.

Members should not be allowed to display any tattoos, brand or body piercing that would detract from an appropriate professional image while in uniform. The Chief of the Montgomery Fire Department or his designee, will use

these guidelines in determining an appropriate fire department image and the acceptability of tattoos, brands or body piercing displayed by members in uniform. Montgomery Fire Department members with existing tattoos or brands before the implementation of this policy not meeting an acceptable Fire Department appearance and image will be required to remove the tattoos or brands if the Chief of the Fire Department or his designee deems that the circumstances are warranted. Otherwise, fire department personnel with existing tattoos or brands will be grandfathered for purposes of compliance with this rule and regulation. Any member of the Fire Department who chooses not to comply with appropriate Fire Department personnel standards is subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal.